Licence to Reliance Telecom

3092. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Reliance Telecom has been awarded license for 16 Telecom Circles as fixed service providers including WLL services;

(b) if so, whether they have been awarded through any bidding process and if not, the other details thereof; and

(c) the benefits accruing to Government arising thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir. M/s Reliance Communications Private Limited has been awarded licence to provide Basic Telephone Service in the service areas of sixteen telecom circles.

(b) No, Sir. The licences have been awarded under the Guidelines dated 25.1.2001 whereby unrestricted open entry has been announced for provision of Basic Telephone Service as envisaged in New Telecom Policy 1999 (NTP 99).

(c) M/s Reliance Communications Pvt. Ltd. has deposited an entry fee amounting to Rs. 398 crores for the licences in the service areas of 16 Telecom circles.

Telephone facility in Almora District of Uttaranchal

3093. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is no telephone facility in Harara, Pinakot, Tolyon, Machhor, Bor and Bhonkhal villages of Talla Salt in Almora District of Uttaranchal;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and by when this facility is likely to be provided in these areas; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by Government for the development of telephone network and laying of optical fibre cable in Almora District?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir. There is no telephone facility in Harara, Pinakot, Tolyon, Machhor, Bor and Bhonkhal villages of Talla Salt in Almora District of Uttaranchal.

(b) Telephone facility in these villages could not be provided as these villages are remotely located. Telephone facility in these villages is planned to be provided by 2002.

(c) Steps such as opening of new exchanges, laying of underground cable and optical fibre cable and installation of Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) have been planned for the current year. Satellite-based telephones for remote villages which can not be covered by terrestrial technologies have also been planned.

Mobile Telephone Service at District Headquarters of Orissa

3094. SHRI MAN MOHAN SAMAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that all the District Headquarters of Orissa have not been covered by mobile telephone network;

(b) if so, by when this is likely to be achieved; and

(c) the organisation/company which is engaged to provide this facility in Orissa?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Licences to provide Cellular Mobile Telephone Service (CMTS) in Orissa Telecom Circle were granted two private operators namely, M/s Reliance Telecom (P) Limited and M/s Koshika Telecom Pvt. Limited which effective dates 12.12.1995 in both cases. Subsequently, licence was also granted to Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) on 29.02.2000. However, licence of M/s Koshika Telecom was terminated on 22.05.1999 due to non-payment of licence fee dues. So far M/s Reliance have covered seven District Headquarters/towns with CMTS in Orissa Telecom circle; BSNL have not started their services in Orissa Telecom Circle as yet.